

FOREWORD

State and local immunization programs are critically important leaders in the nation's immunization system, which the Institute of Medicine has called a "national treasure." Success at the state and local level has translated directly into success at the national level. The important improvements to the health of children that you provide comes from procedures and systems you create at the state and local level. The structure of these procedures and systems is the subject of this Immunization Program Operations Manual.

This Immunization Program Operations Manual (IPOM) is an outgrowth of the Program Performance Guidelines released in draft by the National Immunization Program (NIP) in 1998 and 2000. This new format represents the formal separation of information about "What an effective immunization program looks like" from instructions on "How to write a grant proposal" which will remain in the annual Grant Guidance document. Although now separate, the two documents are essential companions to each other.

Crucial input for the IPOM was provided by a workgroup of the Association of Immunization Managers and the Program Operations Branch at NIP. Additional consultation was provided by subject matter experts from other parts of NIP. In developing the IPOM, these individuals were responsive to the Institute of Medicine "Calling The Shots: Immunization Finance Policies and Practices" that identified the roles of the nation's immunization system and made important recommendations to immunization program operations at the federal, state and local levels. These include the need for immunization policy to be national in scope while remaining flexible enough in implementation to be able to respond to special circumstances that occur at the state and local levels. The Institute of Medicine report also emphasized the important roles federal and state governments play in ensuring an adequate nationwide supply of vaccine.

The IPOM reflects a shift in NIP's approach toward state and local immunization programs that enables both program managers and NIP staff to focus on progress toward meaningful objectives rather than on meeting one-size-fits-all requirements. Previous guidelines on immunization program activities had focused on grant requirements and recommendations that did not consider the circumstances of individual programs. Since the IPOM can be updated as needed, this new approach will facilitate the rapid dissemination of up-to-date information about strategies and activities that work, packaged in a way immunization

program manager will find useful when planning and implementing annual program activities.

We hope that the IPOM will promote a common technical vocabulary conducive to developing national program policy. The editors have organized program activities and performance measures into a framework of defined Activity Areas within Program Components. These categories were derived from previous Grant Guidance documents and Program Performance Guidelines, the recent Institute of Medicine report “Calling The Shots: Immunization Finance Policies and Practices,” input from the AIM working group and NIP’s in-house understanding of program structure and content. This framework encompasses the entire spectrum of activities with which immunization grantees are involved, including traditional program content and more recent program developments.

Although the IPOM is intended to be comprehensive, it is not an all-inclusive guide to immunization program content. We will depend on your feedback to improve and expand on the content and format in future editions.

Lance Rodewald, M.D., Director
Immunization Services Division
National Immunization Program
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Program Operations Branch, ISD
National Immunization Program,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, N.E., Mail stop E-52
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

(404) 639-8215